The Portfolio Connection

Newsletter

April, 1993 Vol 2 Issue No. 1

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Our First Birthday!

The Portfolio Connection Newsletter is one year old this issue. It has certainly grown in its first year and is now a healthy little publication as we are sure you will agree! Due to the amount of new programs and accessories that have or will soon become available, we are still running late with the publication of the newsletter but hope to put this right over the next few issues.

New Phone Number - 0491 836880

Our telephone exchange has finally gone digital and as a result our phone number has been changed to **(0491) 836880** i.e. a figure '8' has been added to our old number. This is also the number for our fax. Please note that our fax switch responds to the tone from your fax, so if your fax is not switched on when our phone answers, you will be switched through to our ansaphone.

Subscriber Offers

Due to the positive response, we are continuing the reduction on our standard set prices from £5 to £4.75 for a further period. The offer will apply to all standard sets ordered up to the last week of June, 1993 and the usual 'order four sets and get one free' offer will still apply. In addition we are offering all subscribers the chance to obtain a registered version of the new ADR_BOOK program reviewed this issue for as little as £8.50 for private use or £25 for commercial use. See Page 4 for further details.

No Competition Claims!

Unbelievably, none of the three holders of the winning lucky numbers, printed in the last issue, have claimed their prize! This means that the BSE I/O Interface is still up for grabs, so turn to Page 9 now for details of our new competition for subscribers only.

Updated Catalogue Now Available

A complete re-write of the catalogue has proved impractical at the present time due to the limitations of our current hardware & software. It would just be too costly. However, an updated catalogue in the old-style format is now available and has been expanded to include our hardware and accessories pricelist. If you would like a copy of the updated catalogue then send us a C5 or A4 size self-addressed envelope and two 18p stamps to cover postage.

Keep in Touch

Let us know if there is anything you would like to see in either the Newsletter or our catalogue and we'll do our best to make it happen!

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New This Issue:

Another three new sets this issue:

New Sets

AP5 - Applications 5

- **Comput** - a quick command line calculator which saves going into the Portfolio's calculator for simple calculations. Just enter eg. Comput 3*4 to get the answer 12.
- **Ohm** - for those of you who are into electronics, this nice little program will work out resistor values based on the colour codes. You enter the colour of each ring and the resistance value is displayed, including tolerance.
- **BCL** - this is an excellent floating point calculator/compiler specifically for the Portfolio. The calculator is fully programmable and the basic calculation 'engine' can read image definition files based on your own needs. This enables you to tailor the program specifically to suit your own requirements, while keeping memory use to a minimum. Includes a standard image file and an enhanced image file with function plotting and zero finding macros.
- **Fonio** - is a touch-tone dialler.
- **Phone** - translates American phone numbers which use letters into number only format.
- **Graphio** - this nice little program is, we believe, a first for the Portfolio. It will read data from the clipboard and convert it into a bar chart. The bar chart can then be printed onto an Epson compatible printer.
- **HitMaker** - this program was written by an audio engineer to perform the complex calculations needed by music producers/audio engineers. It will work out lead in times and certain aspects of a recording based on beats per minute and other factors. A bit beyond us but seems very useful for those involved in music, TV and radio.
- **Parser** - this very useful program will take an ASCII text report and

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Top Ten Sets

❶	⇔	Games 1
❷	⇧	Wordprocessing 1
❸	⇧	Graphics 1
❹	⇔	Utilities 2
	⇧	PC Accessories 1
❻	⇔	Games 2
	⇧	ST Accessories 3
❽	⇩	PBasic 1
	⇔	Coms 1
❿	⇩	PC Accessories 2

NEWS

Optrol Flash Cards - Good News!

We were all disappointed when Optrol announced that they would not be able to produce the 1Mb, 2Mb and 4Mb flash memory cards for the Portfolio, due to difficulty in obtaining the chips (see issue 5 of *The Portfolio Connection* Newsletter). The good news is that they have now produced a 524k card using different chips. The new card has lots of interesting features:

- The card requires special software to run, but this is included on the card in a special 'boot block' which your Portfolio reads as a ROM card in Drive A. Simply reboot your Portfolio and the driver software is loaded automatically. After rebooting, the remainder of the card is accessible as Drive D.
- The 'boot block' can also be customised to keep your most important programs on.
- The cards do not use batteries but data can be retained for about 10 years.
- As the memory is FlashRAM files are not overwritten but rather the old file hidden and the new file copied to an unused part of the card, similar to a database. Gradually, the card gets filled and has to be 'cleaned' to free up space on the card. The driver software will warn you when the card is nearly full and you then need to run a program called 'clean'.
- The card also includes the ability to create a 128k RAM disk on your Portfolio, configured as Drive E. This is useful if you intend to do a lot of editing to a file - you can do your editing on the RAM disk and copy the file to the flash card once when editing is complete. This will prevent the card filling up too quickly.

As you can see, the card has plenty of features. Price is likely to be around £190. Whilst this is still expensive, it is good value compared to the other cards available, being about £35 cheaper than the current 512k card. We expect delivery of an evaluation card shortly and there will be a review in a future issue. In the meantime, please contact *The Portfolio Connection* if you are interested in these new cards.

*AA Batteries Now Available - only £1.80**

Following last issue's announcement that we can now supply CR2016 lithium batteries used in Portfolio memory cards, we have also begun to stock AA size batteries for use in the Portfolio itself. We are offering these at just £1.80 for a set of three including VAT & P+P, which represents a considerable saving over the £2.20 or so you would pay at High Street retailers for an equivalent number.

*Sets of three

HyperList Arrived

We have finally received a copy of HyperList from the USA and are extremely impressed with the program so far. HyperList is a versatile outliner program similar to the Portfolio's built-in address book application but capable of multiple index levels. This enables you to organise data in a variety of different ways and access it very quickly. It also has a couple of other very useful features such as the 'Tally' function which will automatically total the figures in a sub-list. This is useful, for example, in tracking expenses. It comes on a ROM card and a PC version is included too! UK price will be approximately £40. We will be giving HyperList a full review in a future issue of the newsletter but contact *The Portfolio Connection* for more details if you can't wait!

Portfolio Programs from Germany

We have received news of a number of interesting accessories from German companies. These include:

- **Portwalk** - with the help of the parallel interface, Portwalk enables you to save and restore programs from your Port to a standard tape recorder. This gives you a relatively cheap and reliable way to save and restore Portfolio data and programs. It might be possible for those of you who do not own another computer or have a non-compatible desktop computer to obtain *Portfolio Connection* PD & shareware programs in this way. Cost is likely to be in the region of £45.
- **Diskfolio** - is a floppy disk drive interface for the Portfolio.
- **I/O Interface** - provides three 8-bit in/out ports for the Portfolio. Fully programmable.
- **Oscilloscope** - use your Portfolio as an oscilloscope. Demo available.
- **PortEx** - is an experimental card that allows you to connect 'dry' electronic components to the Portfolio. Useful for the development of peripherals.
- **Midi Interface** - as reported in a previous issue of *The Portfolio Connection* Newsletter.
- **Portalog** - for measurement of all sorts of data using the Portfolio.
- **Multiport** - appears to be Germany's answer to the BSE Interface. Contains two RS232 ports, one parallel printer port, 512k RAM upgrade and 256k EPROM.

If you are interested in any of these programs, then contact us on (0491) 836880 for more information.

Re:Port Newsletter

The current issue of Re:Port contains, among others, a review of the new Optrol 524k card, an article on the new features PBasic 5.0 and an article on getting DOS programs to run on the Portfolio. This issue's programs include a Grocery Shopping program and an exciting downhill Ski game. You can buy a year's subscription (6 bimonthly issues) directly from America for $55 but to save the hassle involved, we have arranged with David to distribute Re:Port here in Britain. One year's subscription costs just £40 including P+P - contact *The Portfolio Connection* for details. Please note that prices may be subject to change without notice due to fluctuations in the exchange rate.

Portfolio Repairs A Success

A number of readers have taken advantage of the Portfolio repair service announced in the last issue of *The Portfolio Connection* Newsletter, and the feedback has been very positive. So if your Portfolio is in need of repair at a reasonable price, contact us here at *The Portfolio Connection.*

more next issue....

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A Review of Don Thomas' Adr_Book Program

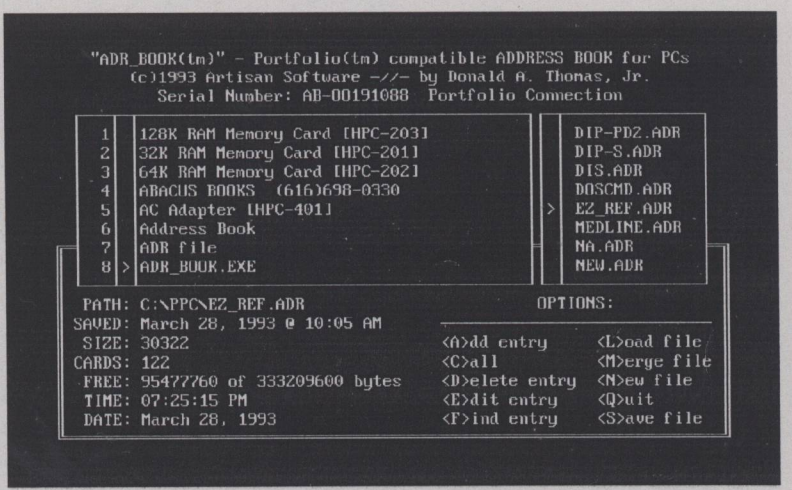
An Address Book Program for the PC

Adr_Book is an affordable address book application for the PC. Written by Don Thomas of Artisan Software, Adr_Book gives PC users a flat file database which uses the familiar Portfolio address book format and allows Portfolio users to read, edit and otherwise manipulate their Portfolio address book files on their desktop PC. One of the most useful features of the program is that it allows you to break the 50k file size limit imposed by the Portfolio application software.

Overview

The Adr_Book screen is split into three sections (see diagram). The top left window has two modes, index view or card view. Index view shows the index lines of the currently loaded address book file while card view will show the contents of a particular card. The window on the top right holds drive, directory and file information.

The right hand side of the lower window contains a list of command options. A useful feature is that those commands not available at any time are automatically 'greyed' out. The left hand side contains assorted useful information such as the current file name, its size, number of cards, free space on disk and current system time and date.



The Adr_Book Screen in Index View mode

Commands

In index view, most commands are accessed by pressing the first letter of the command. Four additional commands are available using the Ctrl key to set aspects of the system - time, date, printer and serial ports. On pressing the Ctrl key, these options are highlighted on the base line and can be accessed by pressing the first letter of the option. The available commands are as follows:

- <A>dd entry - this allows you to insert a new record and the display switches to card (or edit) mode. Pressing the Ins key will do the same job.
- <C>all - this command allows you to dial a telephone number on the index line of a card using a modem. The com port used by your modem must be set using the Ctrl+S combination mentioned earlier. On pressing C for Call, the display switches to card mode, but the area below the index line contains the various combinations of phone numbers in the index line (similar to the Portfolio itself). Pressing enter will dial the number the cursor is on. The modem string can be edited by pressing the space bar.
- <D>elete entry - this command will delete the record marked by the cursor. Pressing the Del key performs the same function.
- <E>dit entry - allows you to edit the record marked by the cursor. The display switches to card mode. Pressing the Enter key does the same job.
- <F>ind entry - this versatile command will enable you to find a string in one or more records. When you first press F you are prompted to enter a string or phrase to search for. On pressing Enter, further options appear at the bottom of the screen. These options are also selected by pressing the bracketed letter:
  - <A>mount - this option will count the number of records containing the chosen string.
  - <E>xtract - as it says, this option will extract all records containing the string and discard the rest.
  - <F>irst - this option moves the pointer to the first record in the file which contains the chosen string.
  - <N>ext - this option moves the cursor to the next record in the file which contains the string.
  - <X>clude - this option is the opposite of Extract and will discard all records containing the string and keep all of those which do not.
- <L>oad file - this command allows you to access the file selection window in the top right corner. The cursor can then be positioned by the appropriate drive, directory or file and pressing the Enter key will select it.
- <M>erge file - this command is similar to Load file but the selected file will be merged with the currently loaded file. A nice feature, not available on the Portfolio itself, is that duplicate entries are flagged and you are prompted to delete them. This can save a lot of sorting and the need to delete duplicate records one by one.
- <N>ew file - this command will clear the current file from memory and start with a new empty file.
- <Q>uit file - this command will exit Adr_Book.
- <S>ave file - this command is disabled in the Shareware version, but in the registered version gives access to the file selection window where a file can be selected in a similar way to Load file. An additional 'new file' option appears and if you select this, you are prompted for the new file name.

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A Review of Don Thomas' Adr_Book Continued

Alternate Key Commands

A number of commands are available in card view mode and are mostly accessed by pressing the Alt key and another key. The available commands are:

- Alt + C - Capture. This command captures the line of text indicated by the cursor. Similar to the Portfolio clipboard 'store' command.
- Alt + P - Print. This command will print the current record.
- Alt + Del - delete the line indicated by the cursor.
- Alt + Ins - this command will insert a blank line above the line indicated by the cursor. If the Alt + C (Capture) command has been used, then the captured line will be inserted.
- Enter - pressing the Enter key will insert a blank line below the line indicated by the cursor. Once again, if the Alt + C (Capture) command has been used, then the captured line will be inserted.

Summary

Adr_Book has a lot of features which make it easy to edit, extract and combine records into the Portfolio address book format. Apart from a couple of exceptions (see below), the program is quite intuitive to use.

A feature I find really useful is the ability to save address book files larger than the 50k Portfolio limit. Using Adr_Book it is possible to keep a main address book file, say a client database, which is greater than 50k on your PC. This main file can then easily be divided into smaller address books for the Portfolio using Adr_Book's Extract and Exclude commands.

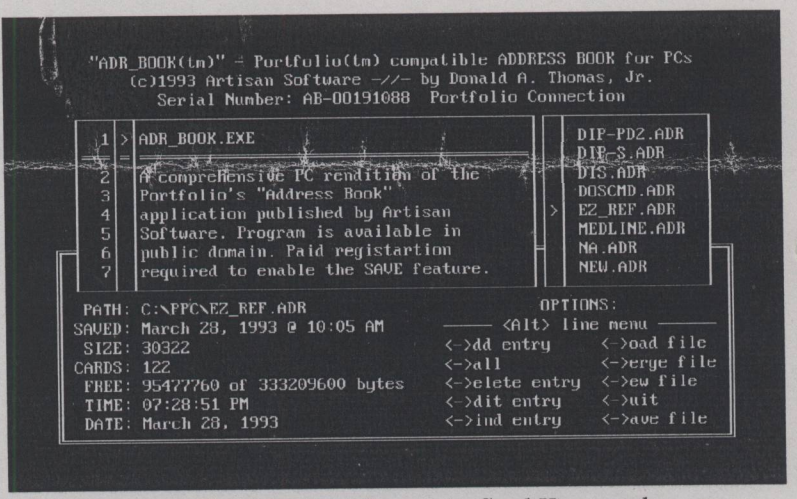
Another very useful feature is the ability of the merge command to identify and delete any duplicate records which have been merged. This can save a lot of time compared to finding and deleting duplicates one by one in the Portfolio address book.

I have a couple of minor grumbles and suggestions for future releases. The most important of these is that if you exit the program it does not prompt you to save your work. Thus if you have edited a file and exit without remembering to save, then you lose any changes you have made. Similarly, if you modify a file and then Extract some records, you will lose any changes you made to the main file if you did not remember to save before extracting.

Another irritating quirk is that if you save a file, the file selection menu jumps back to the beginning of the file list. If your file is half way down the list, you have to move down to it again using the arrow keys. If you are doing a lot of editing, this can get to be quite time consuming. One answer would be to have a key combination such as Alt+S which would quickly save to the same file as was loaded.

Two other features I would like to see are these. Firstly, a clipboard feature similar to the Portfolio, so that complete or partial records could be cut or copied and then pasted elsewhere, including another file if need be. Secondly, a print command which would print all of the index lines in a file would be handy. The ability to print a single record is very useful but a 'print index lines' feature would give a nice a short-form overview of a database file.

The above are really minor problems when using Adr_Book and once you have got used to the quirks of the program, it is very practical to use. Considering the cost of registration, Adr_Book is excellent value for money and an economic solution to simplify the handling of Portfolio address book files on a PC.



The Adr_Book Screen in Card View mode

Registration Offer

Registration of Adr_Book is normally $18 for individual use and $40 for commercial use. *The Portfolio Connection* has negotiated with Don Thomas to become a registration point for Adr_Book in the UK *and* at discount prices! Two ways of registering are possible. You can order a pre-registered version of Adr_Book or, if you have already have a shareware copy from Set PC3 for evaluation purposes, you can order a password to activate the 'Save file' feature. Prices are as follows:

Non-Subscribers

- **Pre-registered**
  - Individual £11.00
  - Commercial £30.00
- **Password**
  - Individual £9.50
  - Commercial £28.50

Subscribers

The following special rates are available for subscribers:

- **Pre-registered**
  - Individual £10.00
  - Commercial £27.50
- **Password**
  - Individual £8.50
  - Commercial £25.00

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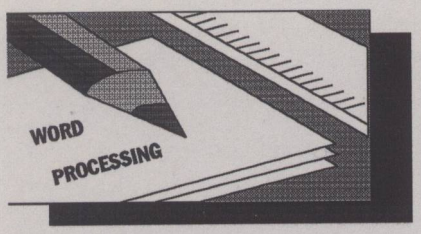

Using Print Codes with the Port

Fancy Printing on the Portfolio

The text editor in the Portfolio is fairly basic, without the usual bells and whistles associated with full-blown word processors. However, with a bit of practice, it is possible to produce some nice effects to make printed output direct from the Portfolio's editor more professional. The secret is to 'embed' printer control codes in your text.

Control Codes

In order to print correctly a printer needs to receive commands from your computer software to tell it what to do, such as 'move on one line', 'eject the page' etc etc. In more advanced programs this is handled completely within the word processor and is transparent to the operator. In the Portfolio however, the built-in control is relatively basic. Using the 'Printer' selection from the Portfolio's setup menu, it is possible to set some of these parameters. These are:

- **Page length** - or number of lines per page. On reaching this number, the Portfolio will send a 'page eject' command to your printer. Normal values are 66 for 8½" x 11" letter and 70 for A4.
- **End of line** combination - This can be set to CR (carriage return) alone, or CR + LF (line feed) or CR + LF + LF. The second option effectively gives single line spacing and the last option double line spacing.
- **Margins** - Top, bottom and left-hand margins can be set as numbers of lines for the first two and characters for the last one. The page length minus the top and bottom margins will give the number of lines of text that will actually be printed per page. Thus if the page length is 66 and the top and bottom margins are set at 5 each, then you will get 56 lines of printed text per page. Similarly the left-hand margin plus the right margin (as set in the editor) will give the printed right-hand margin. So, if the left-hand margin is set to 10 and the right margin in the editor set to 60, the right-hand margin on printed output will be 10+60=70.
- **Setup Code** - this is a global command that can be sent to the printer before printing begins eg. 'turn on letter quality'. A code is used in a similar way to that discussed below, but it is less flexible than embedding print codes directly as it will apply to the whole document.

Escape Sequences

So how does the printer know whether the information it receives is data to be printed or a command? The answer is that any command is preceded by an escape sequence. This is the same as ASCII character code 27 or Esc character. So, if the printer receives a ASCII code 27, it will expect a control code to follow.

So far so good. However, in the text editor pressing Esc will exit from the program, so another method is used to embed codes. The crucial key here is the caret or Shift+6. If you press this key once in the editor nothing will happen because the caret is used as the control and is waiting for a further key to be pressed. To generate the Esc sequence, pressing the caret is followed by the left square bracket. When you have done this, the two characters will appear as one unit ^[. If you now do one backspace, both characters will be erased. Incidentally, to produce a straight caret in your text, you press the caret key twice. Not all printer control codes use the Escape sequence first, but most do.

Now all you need to do is to follow the Escape sequence with the specific code your printer uses to perform a certain action. For example, on most Epson compatible printers, the control code to switch underline mode on is Esc- i.e. Esc + - . Thus to enter this in the editor, you would position the cursor where you wanted to start underlining and the press Shift+6 followed by [. This would produce the Escape sequence ^[. You would then press - (dash) to give the full control code. In the editor it will look like this:

^[-

If you look through the instruction book for your printer you will find a list of codes to perform all manner of actions. Much is possible including double height and double width characters, but remember that the change in size will only be seen when the document is printed so you need to experiment a bit to be sure of getting good results.

Also remember that some codes are not available for all printers. For instance, to use the italic code with an HP Deskjet, you must have an italic font installed in the printer.

Examples of Common Control Codes

The table shows the Escape sequence for each action followed by how this will look in the Portfolio Editor.

EPSON PRINTERS (or compatible)

➢ Double Strike On	(Esc)G	^[G
➢ Double Strike Off	(Esc)H	^[H
➢ Emphasised On	(Esc)E	^[E
➢ Emphasised Off	(Esc)F	^[F

Bold is often achieved by using both emphasised and double strike together.

➢ Underline On/Off	(Esc)-	^[-
➢ Underline On	(Esc)-1	^[-1
➢ Underline Off	(Esc)-0	^[-0

Either of these will usually work.

➢ Italic On	(Esc)4	^[4
➢ Italic Off	(Esc)5	^[5
➢ Subscript On	(Esc)S1	^[S1
➢ Superscript On	(Esc)S0	^[S0
➢ Subscript/Superscript Off	(Esc)T	^[T
➢ 12 CPI (Elite pitch)	(Esc)M	^[M
➢ 10 CPI (Pica pitch)	(Esc)P	^[P
➢ Double Width On	(Esc)W1	^[W1
➢ Double Width Off	(Esc)W0	^[W0
➢ Double Height On	(Esc)w1	^[w1
➢ Double Height Off	(Esc)w0	^[w0

In all of the above, 0 is the number 0 or zero rather than the letter O. Note too that the codes are case sensitive - (Esc)W1 will produce double width and (Esc)w1 double height.

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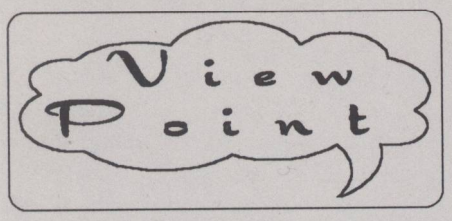

Readers' Letters and Tips

This issue we have a long letter full of tips and questions and a correction....

Dear Ed

Might I pen a few points that aren't worthy of their own letter but add up to a worthwhile offering en masse?

On the subject of carry cases for the Port, I have tried the Lynx case in all its' configurations and, despite my earlier hopes, I just don't think it does the job. However, I have found a bag which seems tailor made. Dixons do a padded camera bag from the Miranda Photographic Bag Co. It retails at just under fifteen quid, looks smart, unobtrusive and, above all, is very rugged - as you would expect for something designed for camera equipment. It has a large zipped front pocket, zipped mesh pocket under the hood and variable velcro dividers which enable a customised layout for the Port and extras. At present I carry the Port, mains adaptor, two memcards, parallel transfer cable, batteries, 3.5" floppy disk box with all software disks plus all sorts of pens, pencils, notebooks needed for a travelling office. At the rear is a zipped pocket which holds the latest Newsletter and Port manual. I need something to read whilst out and about! Add to this an internal keyring and a full length zip to allow expansion to twice the size I think it has just about everything.

Why does Timedate.hoo decline to work? I have loaded it in the root directory, have no buffers in the config.sys, have reloaded it from disk in case of corruption but still no joy. It stopped working when I started using File Manager. Any connection?

File Manager is an excellent front end which improves the one-fingeredness of the Port. I have completely rearranged my files into several more directories since installing FM - mainly because of the bore of DOS path typing. It came free with Baron's book too!

My greatest annoyance was when going into the editor- after working on a large text file the last time. Result = long wait, unwanted large text file. Solution was to either exit the editor with File/New from the menu or (my preference) create BLANK.TXT with just two CRs and use that each time from File Manager.

Since then I have created several templates with personal address, work address etc and with a little basic maths it is possible to right-align everything. Count letters and spaces in each line, subtract from preferred right margin, space over to column 53 for example where the address line has 17 characters and RM is 70, CR and repeat as necessary. A nice touch is to add a line for Date and save the template with the cursor just after that. This will take you to the date space each time you load ready for the correct one to be inserted. You can still compose at RM of 38 and return to 70 when done as all will be arranged in order just like this letter. Another useful dodge is to use OVR mode at the head of the page to enter the recipient's address etc which will leave your address on the right still aligned.

You said recently in the Newsletter that the indent TAB spacing was user-definable. Is this right? If so, how? I have tried several times to find the method but cannot do so either in the Port or from the book.

Is there a good book that would make informative and useful reading about PBasic? What Basic does it most resemble and is there a book that explains more about the grammar and syntax of a programming language? By that I mean the mysterious spaces, semi-colons and signs ($ and %%) for those of us who went to school before the chip arrived in the classroom. I have no aspirations to become a programme writer but nevertheless I still remember the buzz from typing in a long listing on a Spectrum years ago and getting a random screenful of changing dots! It would be nice to have an inkling of how the Menu maker in an earlier Newsletter worked for example.

I know it is an emulation problem but does anyone know how to get a Pound Sterling sign out of a Brother HL8-E. The Brother is set to emulate a LaserJet 11 but despite changing through all the other emulation options I still can't get the Port to persuade it that it's all for a quiet life and just wants an insignificant £ sign!

Thanks for any help

John Akers

....thanks for the case idea and your Editor tips. The problem with timedate.hoo is almost certainly to do with File Manager. FM is a nice program but its drawback is that it is a terrible memory hog. This doesn't particularly effect the internal applications because they are read directly from ROM but you notice it when you try to use external programs unless they are very small. With regard to your editor tip - one of the nice points about File Manager is that if you press enter when the cursor is on a file ending with the extension .txt, the editor is opened with that file loaded up and ready to go.

PBasic was written to be compatible with Microsoft Basic and therefore any good book on GW Basic will supply you with the grammar and syntax info you require. The on-disk manual also gives syntax of all commands but not too many examples unfortunately. There is supposed to be a bound PBasic manual with examples but it is proving very difficult to track down. We tried to obtain some of these from the USA but were sent through the on-disk manual printed out and held in a binder - if anyone is interested, we can supply these for £11 each including P+P.

We are afraid we got it wrong about the tabs - as far as we know they are NOT user-definable - sorry.

The problem with the '£' sign is probably due to a quirk of the Portfolio keyboard. On a UK keyboard, the '£' sign is obtained by using Shift '3'. On the Portfolio keyboard, Shift '3' is the '#' (or hash) which is the same as on a US style keyboard, whilst the '£' sign is in the highly unusual position of Alt '['. For some reason, this will not (usually) print out properly on a printer.

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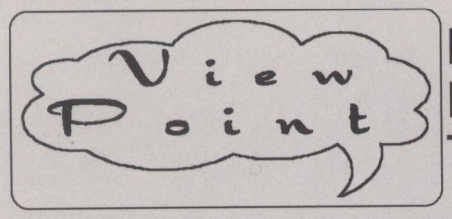

Readers' Letters & Tips cont.

I am not familiar with your printer, but if it is set for the UK Character Set (frequently using a DIP switch) then using the Shift '3' hash sign will often print out the '£' sign. If this does not work, you need to enter the character code directly into the Portfolio.

First look up the character code for '£' sign in the printer handbook (eg 175), then, in the Portfolio editor hold the Atari key and then press the Caps Lock key. This accesses the Portfolio's embedded number pad. Hold down the Alt key and using the number pad numbers (the pink numbers to the mid-right of the keyboard) enter the character code numbers whilst keeping the Alt key held down. Thus for the example above, it would be Alt 1 7 5 then release the Alt key. A symbol will appear in the editor which probably won't be a '£' sign but will print as a '£' sign on your printer. Fiddly, but it should work. Don't forget to disable the Num Lock when you have done or you may get some odd results!

Editor

Worksheet Tip Error

Part of Chris Thompson's worksheet tip last issue for working in degrees rather than radians contained an error. It should read:

➢ Angle in degrees = @ASIN(sin of angle)*360/(2*Pi)

.....thanks for notifying us of the error Chris.

Editor

Send your letters/tips to:

The Portfolio Connection
Bucklands Cottage
Wallingford Road
Cholsey
Oxon OX10 9HB

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New this Issue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

AP5 - Applications 5 cont.

➢ **Parser cont.** - convert it into a Lotus 123 compatible spreadsheet.
➢ **Unitio** - a very useful unit conversion program. Comes with a standard data conversion file containing about 170 different types of conversion and, as if this isn't enough, the data file can be customised to your own requirements. Unitio will also send output to a printer if connected.

PG7 - Chasm/Program Tools

➢ **Bxd2** - the BrandX full screen symbolic debugger. A PC program which works on the Port.
➢ **Chasm** - the 'cheap assembler'. This assembler will work on the Portfolio. However, as the complete set of files total 400k (not all needed on the Port), it is supplied in a self-extracting archive which will need to be unpacked on a PC.
➢ **Dump** - this utility will 'dump' the contents of the Portfolio's RAM to screen or file.
➢ **Techie** - 'Good Programmers Don't Write Specs' - an amusing PRead file for programmers.
➢ **Soksrce** - the C source code for the Sokoban game in Set GM3.
➢ **Lcd.tpu** - a Turbo Pascal Unit for handling Portfolio pgc graphics files.

PW2 - PowerBasic 2 Plus

➢ **Graph** - draws a 3D graph.
➢ **Mkxterm2** - for PowerBasic owners, this program will create the program Xterm2 on your Portfolio.
➢ **PF** - beta test version of pre-flight computer. No documentation.
➢ **Phone** - tone dialler.
➢ **2Tic** - play Tic Tac Toe with another Portfolio. Needs serial connection.
➢ **Dice** - electronic dice.
➢ **Pattern** - An excellent pattern puzzle game, but then again, I'm biased because I wrote it!
➢ **Plotto** - Canadian lottery assistant program.
➢ **Zeros** - another excellent puzzle game written by me!
➢ **PDD** - a series of programs, mostly in PowerBasic, enabling the use of the Portfolio with Tandy's PDD1 & PDD2 disk drives. Also includes a PDD emulator for the PC.
➢ **Prcodes** - three editor hooks written by me in PowerBasic to enable you to embed basic printer codes into text in the text editor. There is one hook for Epson compatible printers, one for the HP Deskjet and one for HP Laserjet IIP compatible printers.

The set includes Pbrun.com so that anyone can use the programs whether or not you own PowerBasic. The following programs written in Swift Basic for the Portfolio also include a run-time program to enable anyone to use the programs whether you own Swift Basic or not.

➢ **Midigolf** - very nice graphical golf game. Although prompts are in German, the program is easy to understand and use.
➢ **Mininim** - nice rendition of the game of Nim. Again the program is in German, but is easy to use.
➢ **Runner** - an animated demo of sprites using Swift Basic.

New Additions

Only one new addition this month to Set CM1:

➢ **PCom** - this very comprehensive coms program for the Portfolio can communicate at speeds up to 2400 baud. Includes capture and scroll-back features. Xmodem and ASCII file transfer. Can also be used to connect to a PC and transfer files between Portfolio and Port using a special transfer protocol which does not change the file sizes (unlike Xmodem which 'rounds up' the file to the nearest 128 bytes).

As there is only one new addition this month, it has been added to last issues update disk (PBasic v5.0) and can be obtained as:

Set UP5 - Update 5

That's it for this issue but we still have many new programs we are sorting through. Keep a lookout for Wordprocessing 5, Graphics 5, Games 4, Utilities 4 and PC Accessories 4. Watch *The Portfolio Connection* Newsletter for details of these new sets as they become available.

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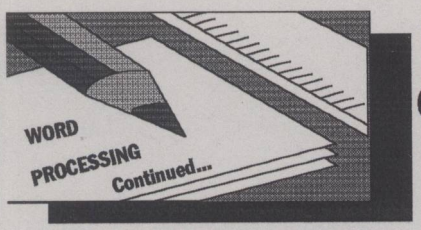

Using Print Codes With The Port

Continued.....

HP DESKJET (or compatibles)

➢ Bold On	(Esc)(s3B	^[s3B
➢ Bold Off	(Esc)(s0B	^[s0B
➢ Underline On	(Esc)&d1D	^[&d1D
➢ Underline Off	(Esc)&d@	^[&d@
➢ Italic On	(Esc)s1S	^[s1S
➢ Italic Off	(Esc)s0S	^[s0S

HP LASERJET II (or compatibles)

➢ Bold On	(Esc)(s1B	^[s1B
➢ Bold Off	(Esc)(s0B	^[s0B
➢ Underline On	(Esc)&d0D	^[&d0D
➢ Underline Off	(Esc)&d@	^[&d@
➢ Italic On	(Esc)s1S	^[s1S
➢ Italic Off	(Esc)s0S	^[s0S

For most printers the code for a page break is Ctrl L (^L).

Still confused....see our Printer Hooks!

If all this is confusing then do not worry. Set PW2 (see page 7) contains some editor hooks we have written in PowerBasic which will insert the control codes for the more popular commands:

- ➢ Underline
- ➢ Bold
- ➢ Italic

into the text editor for you. Three versions are included, one for Epson-compatible printers, one for HP Deskjet and one for HP Laserjet II compatible printers. Just select the one emulated by your printer.

In the next issue, we will be announcing stand-alone versions of these programs (PowerBasic programs need the tsr PBrun.com to be loaded before they will operate).

If you find these programs useful, then please let us know. If there is enough interest, we could write a more comprehensive hook giving access to more control code features. Also, if your printer is not compatible with the versions above, then please contact us and we can make up a specific stand alone version for your printer for a nominal charge of just £1.50. Contact us on (0491) 836880.

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The PBasic Column

Working with the Spreadsheet - part one

The ability of PBasic to access Portfolio specific features is without compare, and an excellent example of this is shown in the spreadsheet functions. There are three:

- ➢ WKSREAD
- ➢ WKSREAD$
- ➢ WKSTYPE

These three functions allow you to extract information from your spreadsheets to use in other applications and programs. An obvious use would be in the creation of graphs from spreadsheet data. We will take a closer look at the three functions below.

Wksread

This will return the number in a specific cell of a named spreadsheet file. The syntax is:

```
wksread(filename,row,col)
```

Filename is a string and the default extension is .wks so the filename string need only contain the first eight characters of the chosen spreadsheet file. The row and column are numbers starting at 0,0. Thus A1 will be 0,0; B1 will be 0,1; C4 will be 3,2 etc. etc.

As you are likely to be reading more than one value, the result will normally be stored in an array, which should be set up at the start of the program using the Dim command eg:

```
Dim a(60)
```

This will allow you to store 60 numbers as a(1), a(2) etc. So, to store the contents of cell D6 from spreadsheet file 'money.wks' into array variable a(6) we would use the following format:

```
a(6)=wksread("money",5,3)
```

Wksread$

This is essentially the same as wksread but, rather than reading the number, will read the string contained in a specific cell. The format is exactly the same as using wksread but the results need to be stored in a string variable. Thus:

```
w$=wksread$("money",0,0)
```

will store the string contained in cell A1 of spreadsheet file 'money.wks' in the variable w$. An important point to note is that the alignment character: ' for left-aligned, ^ for centred and " for right-aligned will also be included in the string and will probably need to be removed with a mid$ or right$ statement.

Wkstype

The final spreadsheet function has the same format as wksread and wksread$ but this time will return a number indicating the type of the cell specified. Thus:

```
t=wkstype("money",17,10)
```

will store a number in the variable t, indicating the type of cell at K16 in file 'money.wks'. These are the possible values of t:

1	EOF	12	Blank
13	Integer	14	Real
15	Label	16	Formula Result (Real)

Part Two next issue.....

PBasic (currently version 5.0) is a public domain basic interpreter for the Portfolio, written by B J Gleason of The American University.

✱✱✱ You can STILL win a Brand New BSE ✱✱✱ ✱✱✱ I/O Interface in our Subscribers' Draw! ✱✱✱

We are absolutely amazed that no-one claimed their prize from the lucky numbers competition but we are determined to give the prizes away to someone, so try your luck in our new 'subscribers only' draw.

THE PRIZES

In case you need reminding, here are the prizes on offer:

1st Prize

A BSE Universal I/O interface with parallel port, serial port and 128k EPROM with File Manager, Xterm2, PBasic and other software, worth £89.95. Also included is the chance to upgrade to the 512k RAM version for just £99.95!

2nd Prize

A quality leather Portfolio Carrying Case, worth over £32!

3rd Prize

A year's free subscription to *The Portfolio Connection* Newsletter or a credit note for £7.50!

TO ENTER:

Simply complete the form below and return to us by **1st JUNE, 1993** at the latest! You must be a subscriber to enter and you must complete the form fully including Name, Address and a program idea you would like to see on the Portfolio. It's as simple as that! If you do not want to spoil your copy of the Newsletter then send us a photocopy or the information on a plain sheet of paper. Send to: *The Portfolio Connection Prize Draw* at our usual address. Winners will be notified and announced in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

Program idea you would like to see on Portfolio:

_____

_____

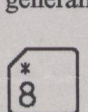
_____

Beginners Column

Navigating the Keyboard - Part 3

This issue we continue our look at the Portfolio keyboard and concentrate on the Shift key combinations. To use the shift key, the shift key is held down and the second key pressed whilst still holding the shift key down.

Starting with the top line of the keyboard, Shift+Esc generally has the same effect as the Esc key on its own and similarly with the Backspace key at the top right. For the keys in between, the shifted version will produce the character on the upper part of the key, thus Shift+8 will give * . For keys with three characters on , such as the 0 key, the shifted key will give the top left character, in this case).



The shifted key will only give the upper character where it is coloured black. If it is coloured red such as the K key or blue such as the arrow keys on the bottom line, then a different method is used and will be explained later.

Moving on to the letter keys which make up the bulk of rows two, three and four of the keyboard, the shifted version will normally produce the capital or upper case of the letter. However, if CAPS lock is on (see later), the shifted key will produce the lower case of the letter.

Shift + the TAB key on row two, generally has no effect, but in some programs will perform a 'tab left' rather than the usual 'tab right'.

The remaining two keys on row two, [and] each have three characters on the key and are treated as the 0 key outlined above. The same is also true of the ; and ' keys on row three. Shift + the ENTER key on row three has no effect.

Shift and the Lock key on row three will toggle the CAPS lock. When you press the Lock key, the status line at the bottom of the screen will become visible temporarily and if CAPS lock is active, the word CAP will be displayed to the right of centre on the status line. All further letter keys typed will now be upper case - unless you use the shift key when they will be lower case as explained earlier.

The situation is the same with the Del key on row four. Shift+Del will toggle the Ins mode on the Portfolio. Again the status line will become visible and the word Ins will be visible on the far right of the display if Ins mode is active. In insert mode, as the name suggests, anything you type will be inserted into existing text. When Ins is not visible in the status line, you are in overtype mode and anything typed will replace already existing text. The two modes make quite a difference when using the in-built applications so it is worth experimenting with the two modes in each application so you get the hang of it.

The \ and , keys used with the shift key are similar to the first row keys mentioned earlier. The . and / keys are treated in the same way as the 0 key mentioned earlier. Shift+shift has no effect.

Similarly Shift has no effect with any of the keys on the last row. Next issue we will be rounding off our journey around the Portfolio keyboard by looking at these remaining keys: the red Atari key, Fn, Ctrl and Alt.

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Classifieds

- **For Sale: Portfolio**, Parallel Peripheral and cables. £99. Dave Churchman - 081 686 8158, any evening after 6pm.
- **For Sale: Pbase database** Rom card c/w manual £35 ono. Will swap for Finance card or Science card. Ring Andy on 0484 722491.
- **Wanted: "Broken Portfolio"**. Ring Chris Thompson on 081-698- 9138.
- **For Sale: Parallel Peripheral** - £25. Ring Alan Chin on 09603 78658.
- **For Sale: Portfolio**, 32k card, 64k card Serial Interface, Manual & Peter Baron book - £175. Ring Chris on 0538 753545.
- **For Sale: Atari Portfolio** - £60, Smart Parallel Interface - £25, File transfer cable - £5, Swift ST Link - £25. All the above for £100 plus postage. Ring Melvyn Flacks on 061-773-5237.

Buyers & Sellers Directory

Some classifieds did not reach the newsletter as we are often phoned by people wanting Portfolio peripherals and, where possible, refer them to those of you who are selling equipment. As a result, we are starting a Buyers & Sellers Directory - contact *The Portfolio Connection* and let us know what you are selling. We will enter this into a directory. Those of you who are after specific Portfolio items can contact us and we will put you in touch with the sellers. Any items not sold by the next Newsletter will go in as classifieds. This should make for a quicker turnover all round so we'll try this scheme for a few months and see how it goes.

The Portfolio Connection Newsletter Classifieds are FREE. Send your advert to :

The Portfolio Connection Newsletter
Bucklands Cottage,
Wallingford Rd Cholsey
Oxon OX10 9HB

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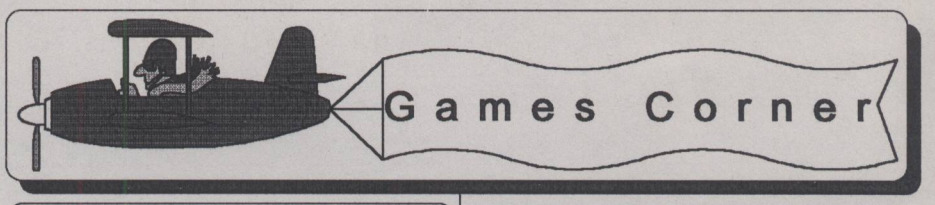
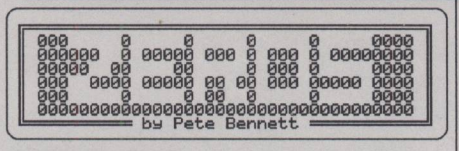
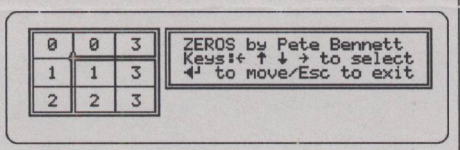




ZEROS *by Pete Bennett*

This issue's game review is very biased as the game was written by me!

Zeros is an exasperating but addictive game that is based on an idea from a book called "Explorer's Guide to the ZX Spectrum and ZX81" by Kasper Boon, but it has been completely modified and re-written for the Portfolio. The program is written in Atari Portfolio Powerbasic and therefore needs the pbrun.com tsr loaded before it will operate. Once loaded, pbrun.com can be removed from your disk. The program will only work on a Portfolio and will NOT run on a standard IBM PC or compatible.



This is an opening screen on the easy level

The Game

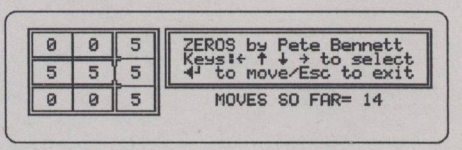
The game consists of a 3x3 grid filled with random numbers from 0 to 5. The arrow keys are used to move the cursor around the grid. If any number is selected, by pressing enter, the row and column of numbers which pass through the one selected are all increased by one. If the number is a 5 and is increased by one, it cycles back to 0. The aim is to get a grid which consists entirely of 0's.

4	2	3
1	1	2
3	4	0

In the example below the 5 has been selected and the row and column affected have been outlined, as they are in the game itself.

3	1	4		4	1	4
2	0	4	BECOMES → →	3	0	4
5	3	1		0	4	2

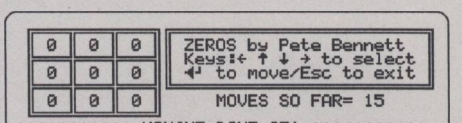
The game includes instructions if required and has been tested with ROM versions 1.072 and 1.030. It has two levels of difficulty - I added the "Easier" level to preserve your sanity!



Just one move away from victory!

When you do manage to complete the game, you are treated to a short winning display complete with musical jingle - what more could you ask!

Zeros can be found in Set PW2 - PowerBasic 2 Plus. Good Luck!



Next Issue:

Next issue will see a review of HyperList, the outliner/database from Atari which promises to be a winner!

We are currently awaiting delivery of new storage for the Portfolio (the Optrol Card and others) and, if they have arrived, will review them in the next issue.

We also hope to bring you the review of the Atari Lynx kit case as a Portfolio carrying case, which is still outstanding.

Don't forget to send us *your* news, views and reviews - although you may think it is not important, it may be just the information another reader needs *and* each item published will receive free, with our compliments, a *Portfolio Connection* PD/Shareware disk of their choice.

Look out as well for the following regular Newsletter items:

- The PBasic Column
- Beginner's Column
- Latest news and Reviews
- Competition Winners (we hope!)

The next issue of *The Portfolio Connection* Newsletter is due out the second week in June, but for those of you reading the newsletter for the first time, remember:

YOU MUST SUBSCRIBE TO RECEIVE YOUR COPY!

Subscription costs just £7.50 a year - see the enclosed subscription form.

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